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The Association Between Class Clown Dimensions, School Experiences and Accomplishment

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The Association Between Class Clown Dimensions, School Experiences and Accomplishment

Introduction

Nearly forty years ago, Damico and Purkey (1978) pioneered a study on class clowns that became a benchmark publication in the field. Utilizing sociometric assessment methods, they screened 3500 pupils, eventually selecting 96 class clowns that yielded 10 or more "class clown" nominations from peers. The class clowns were compared to a randomly selected sample of 237 non-clowns on the bases of teacher ratings, student self-esteem, and school-attitude measures. They report class clowns as being predominantly males, having lower positive attitudes toward teachers and the principal than non-clowns, and they saw themselves as leaders and as being vocal in expressing ideas and opinions to their classmates. Moreover, they were judged by their teachers to be higher than the non-clowns in *asserting*, *unruliness*, *attention seeking*, *leadership*, and *cheerfulness*, but lower in *accomplishing*. Thus, a new and coherent picture of the class clown was emerging; but little additional research took place, with no study replications.

Before building upon these findings, and extending them, a few issues need highlighting. The first relates to the assessment of class clowns. Is there really only one type of class clowns or do more types exist? Is a "type" approach still appropriate, as psychology has moved to dimensional conceptualizations? In the Damico and Purkey (1978) study, there are gradual differences and a criterion of 10 nominations was rather an arbitrary set. So utilizing a dimensional approach to class clown behaviors is more appropriate. Another set of issues relate to the domains of measurements. Are teacher self-reports of *accomplishing* sufficient or should they be supplemented by the objective grades of the student, as well as the student's own perspective and peer reports?

Recently, Ruch, Platt, and Hofmann (2014) proposed a variable-centered, dimensional approach, as an alternative way of investigating class clown behavior. They used a questionnaire depicting a variety of class clown behaviors derived from the literature and developed a hierarchical model of class clown behaviors distinguishing a general factor and four positively correlated dimensions of "identified as a class clown," "comic talent," "disruptive rule-breaker," and "subversive joker." While factors two, three, and four describe different styles of class clown behaviors, the first factor describes that pupils have adopted the role of a class clown and are aware of it. Thus, "being identified as a class clown" (sample item: In my class I am the class clown) represents the crystallization of demonstrating these behaviors over a period of time and high scorers are aware that others expect certain actions from them. The "comic talent" (sample item: During class it does not take long until something funny comes into my mind, that I can share with the person next to me) refers to a class clown behavior that is based on quick-wittedness and is more characterized by spreading good cheer and entertaining others. Unlike the two remaining class clowning dimensions, the comic talents are less conflict-prone, as they don't go against classroom rules or directly challenge the authority of the teacher. The "disruptive rule breaker" (sample item: Some rules in class I find stupid and I laugh at them) is the visible opponent of the teacher; he or she does not take seriously what the teacher says, dismisses what is said to be important, pokes fun at what the teacher says or does and undermines his authority. The "subversive joker" (I make the other kids laugh at what the teacher said or did) is undermining the authority of the teacher, but not necessarily in direct confrontation. He or she also plays pranks on classmates and needs the attention of the class. While these four types are different, the results also clearly confirmed that there are gradual differences among these, and there is no dichotomy of being a class clown or not.

Interesting insights were derived from this preliminary model. For example, when studying class clown behavior in the context of character strengths (Peterson &, Seligman, 2004), signature strengths, and orientations to happiness (Peterson, Park & Seligman, 2005), Ruch et al. (2014) found features that all class clowns share but also features that are specific to the individual dimensions. Class clown behaviors were more frequent among those who had humor as their signature strengths (i.e., the most central strengths), replicating the findings by Damico and Purkey (1978) who found class clowns to be high in "cheerfulness." However, humor does not necessarily lead to class clowning, only when it is paired with low prudence. The four factors yielded different but meaningful correlations with the strengths. For example, factor 2 (comic talent) and 1 (identified as a class clown) went along with leadership, replicating Damico and Purkey (1978), but this was not found for "disruptive rule breaking" and "subversive joking," which were characterized by a lower orientation to the community (i.e., lacking other-directed strengths). Additionally, high scores in "disruptive rule breaking" were also associated with low intellectual strengths and being low in life of engagement and life satisfaction. Not being equipped with school-related strengths (e.g., love of learning, perseverance) and not disposed towards flow (i.e., not leading a life of engagement) facilitates feelings of distraction and boredom at school, which might trigger class clown behavior. Thus, the low accomplishing found by Damico and Purkey (1978) might be characteristic of the disruptive rule breaker. While this type of class clown was low in 14 strengths but high in one (i.e., humor), the opposite was found for the comic talent, with 9 strengths being positively correlated. Thus, the theory proposed by Jewell (2005) might refer to this type of class clown. He stated that to be a gifted humor producer, the class clown requires an empathic ability and "sensitivity to people's feeling and beliefs" (p. 200).

The expression of character strengths is fulfilling (Peterson & Seligman, 2004) and the sum of strengths that can be expressed in a given context (e.g., schools) may contribute to

the degree of well-being experienced in that context. Schools are typically more supportive of strengths such as love of learning, perseverance, zest, social intelligence, self-regulation, prudence, gratitude, and hope (e.g., Wagner & Ruch 2015; Weber & Ruch, 2012; Weber, Wagner, & Ruch, 2016), and less so of humor. Thus, students high in these strengths are more likely to flourish in schools, and, in turn, will exhibit a higher level of satisfaction with school. Flourishing has different components and the different class clown dimensions will each be differentially sensitive to these. For example, Seligman (2011) distinguished five components of flourishing, namely positive emotions, engagement, positive relationships, meaning, and accomplishment (abbreviated as PERMA, an acronym). The study by Damico and Purkey (1978) provides first evidence for less flourishing of class clowns in schools by stating that class clowns were significantly lower in accomplishment (A) and reported less positive attitudes toward the school authorities (i.e., teachers and principal) (R). There was no difference in their attitude towards classmates, (R) suggesting a distinction between attitudes towards relationships with the teachers and the peers. There is indirect evidence for the remaining three components from the study by Ruch et al. (2014). While all four dimensions correlated positively with the life of pleasure (P), the disruptive rule breaker was also low in life of engagement (i.e., flow) (E). The correlations with life of meaning (M) were negative but not significant. This seems to suggest that PERMA is relevant, but the profile (P high, A, R, E low) will differ across the four class clown dimensions, and hence there may be different elements of PERMA mediating the relationship between class clown dimensions and school satisfaction.

Thus, the present study aims at identifying the dimensions of school experiences (positive emotions, positive relationships with teachers and classmates, and accomplishment) that may contribute to a lower overall evaluation of satisfaction with school experiences in students displaying different types of class clown behavior. School satisfaction is defined as

"a student's judgment on the positivity of his or her school experiences as a whole" (Huebner, Gilham, Reschly, & Hall, 2009, p. 561; cf. Huebner, 1994) and it represents the cognitive aspect of childrens' and adolescents' subjective well-being in the domain of school. Prior research has identified school satisfaction as being positively related to positive emotions in school (P), school achievement (A) and to positive relationships in the classroom (R), both with teachers (see Baker, Dilly, Aupperlee, & Patil, 2003) and with classmates (Baker, 1998). One can expect that for those identified as class clowns, comic talent (i.e., the dimensions strongly correlated to humor, a condition for amusement; Ruch et al. 2014) positive emotions will mediate the relation to school satisfaction. We expect that positive relationships with teachers (R) will mediate the negative relationship between the class clown dimensions and school satisfaction. This is based on the fact that the class clown is in opposition to the teacher and it is known that school satisfaction is negatively related with problem behavior (DeSantis King, Huebner, Suldo, & Valois, 2006) and withdrawal at school (Elmore & Huebner, 2010). Finally, we hypothesized that accomplishment (A) will mediate the relationship between the display of class clown behavior and low levels of school satisfaction, especially for the class clown type that lacks the school related strengths the most, i.e., the "disruptive rule breaker."

Method

Participants

Students (N = 157), from nine classrooms of two secondary schools in German-speaking Switzerland (49.0% males and 51.0% females) participated. In Switzerland, there are secondary schools with basic and augmented requirements. The students in the present sample attended secondary schools with augmented requirements that qualify students for further education needed to attend universities. The participants' mean age was 15.34 years (SD = 0.71; ranging from 14 to 18 years; with 88.4% being 15 or 16 years old). The majority

(86.6%) had a Swiss nationality, other nationalities included Italian (3.2%), German (2.5%), Albanian (1.9%), Serbian (1.3%), and seven additional nationalities only mentioned once (4.4% in total). All participants had a good command of the German language.

Instruments

Self-reports

The *Class Clown Behavior Survey* (CCBS; Platt, 2012) is an 18 item self-report instrument assessing a variety of class clown behaviors in a 6-point answer format (1 = *totally disagree* to 6 = *totally agree*). A total score is computed by averaging all items and yielded an internal consistency of $\alpha = .93$. Furthermore, items were averaged to compute the subscales of identified as a class clown, comic talent, disruptive rule-breaker, and subversive joker (see Ruch et al. 2014) and yielded internal consistency coefficients of .89, .86, .82, and .86, respectively.

The *Positive School Experiences Questionnaire* (PSEQ; Ruch & Wagner, 2014) is a self-report measure that assesses different dimensions of positive experiences in school. The measure is based on Seligman's Well-being theory (2011) and measures the presence of the different elements of well-being in the school context, with the element of positive relationships being divided into two aspects: positive relationships with classmates and positive relationships with teachers. Since the students participated a few weeks before graduating from secondary school, we adapted the items so they were asked to look back on last years they had spent in this school when responding to the items. For the purpose of this study, we used the four scales that were most relevant to our research questions: *Positive emotions* at school (e.g., "I experienced a lot of joy at school"; 3 items), *positive relationships with classmates* (e.g., "I got along well with my classmates"; 3 items), *positive relationships with teachers* (e.g., "I felt understood by my teachers"; 3 items), and *accomplishment at school* (e.g., "I had a strong sense of achievement in school"; 5 items). The PSEQ uses a 5-

point answer format (from 5 = *completely agree* to 1 = *completely disagree*). The four scales yielded internal consistencies of $\alpha = .85$ (positive emotions at school), $\alpha = .81$ (positive relationships with teachers) to $\alpha = .85$ (positive relationships with classmates), and $\alpha = .88$ (accomplishment at school). A confirmatory factor analysis conducted in the present sample indicated that a four-factor model (CFI = .94, TLI = .93, RMSEA = .08, SRMR = .07) provided a satisfactory fit to the data, which was also better than models assuming one (CFI = .76, TLI = .73, RMSEA = .14, SRMR = .09), two (CFI = .81, TLI = .77, RMSEA = .15, SRMR = .09), or three factors (CFI = .86, TLI = .83, RMSEA = .13, SRMR = .09).

The *Multidimensional Life Satisfaction Scale* (MLSS; Huebner, 1994) is a self-report measure for the multi-dimensional assessment of life satisfaction in children and adolescents. In the present study, we used the school subscale to assess school satisfaction. It consists of eight items (three of them reverse coded) with a 6-point answer format (from 1 = strongly disagree to 6 = strongly agree). A sample item is "I like being in school." This scale is the most widely used assessment of school satisfaction and its reliability and validity has been demonstrated (see e.g., Elmore & Hueber, 2010). In the present study, the scale yielded an internal consistency of $\alpha = .90$.

Teacher ratings and school grades

The *final grades* at the end of secondary school, which were assigned a few weeks after self-reports were collected, were obtained from the secretary office of one of the two participating schools ($n = 73$ students). This grade point average (GPA) was composed of the grades of the last term and the grades of the final exams.

Teacher *ratings of classroom behavior* were also collected from one of the participating schools. These ratings were similar to the ratings used in Study 2 of Wagner and Ruch (2015). Teachers rated students on a set of learning-related behaviors (e.g., "keeping materials organized") and social behaviors (related to adhering to school rules and to working

well with other students; e.g. "being respectful and helpful towards others") on a scale from 1 = *inadequate* to 4 = *very good*. The ratings are phrased in a way that for most students, a rating of at least 3 (= *good*), if not 4 (= *very good*), would be expected. All teachers that taught in the respective classroom assigned these ratings together in a joint consultation, based on a suggestion by the classroom teacher and a specialist teacher. In addition to the learning-related behavior and the social behavior scales, we have also used a mean score of classroom behavior.

Procedure

Data reported in this study were collected in nine classrooms of two secondary schools, from two towns with around 6,000 and 14,000 inhabitants, respectively, in German-speaking Switzerland. The classroom teachers were instructed by the researchers and read the standardized instructions to the students. Data were collected in a paper/pencil format and anonymized using a personal code. The study complied with the local research ethics committee's requirements based on the APA standards. Participation was voluntary and no one was not paid for their participation. As a compensation for participation, they received written individualized feedback on the rank order of their character strengths, which were assessed together with the variables reported here.

Data analysis

Descriptive statistics (minima, maxima, means and standard deviations) as well as correlations with age and sex for all assessed variables were computed. Since we observed some age and sex differences in our variables of interest, we decided to control for the influence of these in the further analyses. To address the research questions, we computed partial correlations (controlling for age and sex) of total CCBS scores and the scales representing the four dimensions of class clown behavior with school satisfaction, positive school experiences, grades, and teacher ratings, including 95% confidence intervals. The

analyses regarding the different dimensions of class clown behavior are exploratory in nature. As a final step, we conducted mediation analyses to test the direct and indirect effects of dimensions of class clown behavior on school satisfaction. The mediation model is displayed in Figure 1. Mediation analyses were conducted with the help of an SPSS macro using bootstrapping with z = 5,000 resamples to compute 95% confidence intervals for the indirect effects (Hayes, 2013).

Insert Figure 1 about here

Results

Preliminary analyses

Results of the descriptive statistics and correlations with students' age and sex are displayed in Table 1.

Insert Table 1 about here

Table 1 shows that male students scored higher on all dimensions of class clown behavior and reported higher levels of positive emotions at school than females. Age was negatively correlated with positive emotions at school and accomplishment at school, as well as with school achievement (GPA). The intercorrelations between self-reports (school satisfaction and positive school experiences), GPA, and teacher ratings (learning-related and social behavior) are displayed in Table 2.

Insert Table 2 about here

As Table 2 shows, school satisfaction was moderately to highly correlated with all four scales assessing positive school experiences. These four scales had intercorrelations between r = .46 (positive relationships with classmates and accomplishment) and r = .68

(positive relationships with teachers and accomplishment). GPA was moderately associated with school satisfaction, positive relationships with teachers, and accomplishment, but not with the other two aspects of positive school experiences. Teacher ratings on learning-related and social behavior were highly correlated (r = .74) and both were moderately (learning-related behavior) or strongly (social behavior) related to GPA. Teacher-rated social behavior were additionally related with self-reported accomplishment at school and school satisfaction.

Class clown behavior, school satisfaction, positive school experiences, learning-related and social behavior, and school achievement

To examine the relationships among dimensions of class clown behavior, school satisfaction, positive school experiences, grades, and teacher ratings on learning-related and social behavior, partial correlations (controlling for age and sex) were computed (see Table 3).

Insert Table 3 about here

Table 3 demonstrates that *school satisfaction* was negatively correlated with the sum score of the CCBS and with the class clown behavior dimension "disruptive rule-breaker". It was uncorrelated with the other three dimensions of class clown behavior. Higher values in the dimensions "identified as the class clown" and "comic talent" both went along with experiencing more *positive emotions at school*. There were no significant correlations with the scale *positive relationships with classmates*. *Positive relationships with teachers* were negatively correlated with the total score, as well as the dimensions "disruptive rule-breaker" and "subversive joker". Lower sense of *accomplishment at school* went along with higher values on the dimension "disruptive rule-breaker" and was unrelated to the other dimensions and the total score. When investigating at the 95% confidence intervals of the correlations, these did not overlap for the correlations with the dimensions "disruptive rule-breaker" and

"comic talent" for four of the five aspects of positive school experiences: School satisfaction, positive emotions at school, positive relationships with teachers, and accomplishment at school. Consequently, these two dimensions were differently related to positive school experiences, while the other relationships of the other dimensions were similar.

The class clown behavior total score correlated negatively with both learning-related and social behavior ratings by the teachers. The numerically highest correlations with single ratings were with "keeps desk and materials well organized" (r = -.51, p < .001), "works towards goals in a concentrated manner" (r = -.38, p < .001) and "works well with others" (r = -.39, p < .001). The dimension "disruptive rule breaker" revealed the numerically strongest negative correlations in almost all the ratings and was highly correlated with both learning-related and social behavior ratings. It was also the only dimension that showed a significant negative association with "sticks to rules" (r = -.28, p < .05). The CCBS total score as well as the dimensions "identified as the class clown" and "disruptive rule breaker" also correlated negatively with school achievement as measured by the grade point average.

However, since the sample size was relatively small for these ratings (n = 73), the 95% CIs of all correlations between class clown dimensions and teacher ratings/grade point average overlapped, meaning there was no statistically based evidence of any differences in the strength of the correlations between the class clown dimensions in the present study, and that the observable trends are interpreted with caution.

Dimensions of school experiences as mediators of the relationship between class clown behaviors and school satisfaction

In order to examine whether different positive school experiences (positive emotions, positive relationships with classmates and teachers, and accomplishment) account for the correlations between class clown behavior dimensions (predictors) and school satisfaction (outcome), we computed a series of multiple mediation analyses. The analyses were

conducted for the overall class clown behavior (CCBS total score), as well as an exploratory analysis for the four dimensions of class clown behaviors. The mediation model shown in Figure 1 was tested with the four dimensions of positive school experiences as multiple mediating variables, while controlling for age and sex. The results of the mediation analyses are given in Table 4.

Insert Table 4 about here

Table 4 shows that there were negative indirect effects (a_x x b_x) of the relationship with teachers for the CCBS total score and all four dimensions, so this dimension mediated the relation between class clown behavior and school satisfaction. Additionally, there were positive indirect effects of positive emotions at school for the CCBS total score, as well as the dimensions "class clown role", "comic talent", and "subversive joker". There was also a negative indirect effect of accomplishment for the dimension "disruptive rule breaker." For this dimension, a large part of the total effect (the relationship with school satisfaction) could be explained by the two indirect effects of relationships with teachers and accomplishment. For the CCBS total score, the direct effect after controlling for the indirect effect was almost as large as the total effect, since the two indirect effects were in different directions.

Discussion

The present study replicates Damico and Purkey (1978) in as much as class clowns are shown to be predominantly male, to have lower positive attitudes toward teachers, and to be lower in accomplishment. However, it also transcends the classic study in several ways. First and most importantly, some dimensions of class clown behavior (specifically "comic talent" and "disruptive rule-breaker") differed from each other regarding their associations with the studied outcomes. Thus, it is demonstrated that "class clown" should not be seen as a unitary concept but that differentiating several dimensions is imperitive. Second, school

accomplishment is assessed in multiple ways including grade point average. Third, accomplishment and relationships to teachers are studied in the broader context of flourishing at school. Fourth, dimensions of flourishing are related to school satisfaction, and partly mediate the relationship between class clown behaviors and satisfaction with school.

Class clowns being low in accomplishing at school, as claimed by Damico and Purkey (1978), mostly applies to the disruptive rule breaker, but not to the comic talent. Their grade point average and also subjective sense of accomplishment are lower (than non-clowns). Moreover, and relatedly, teachers reported a lower level of learning-related behavior, social behavior, and lower overall positive classroom behavior. This pattern exhibits that class clown behavior goes along with lower satisfaction with school, an effect not found for either the comic talent or for the subversive joker. There is a direct effect from disruptive rule breaking on lower school satisfaction, but there are also indirect effects mediated by lower accomplishment and lower positive relationships with teachers. In the previous study (Ruch et al. 2014), the high scorers in disruptive rule breaking were uniquely lower in the factors of intellectual strengths and other-directed strengths (in addition to being low in strengths of temperance, like all class clowns), and overall lower in 14 of the 24 strengths studied. Among these were virtually all of the strengths typically relating to school performance (e.g., love of learning, perseverance, zest, prudence). The design of the study does not allow drawing a conclusion about causality and if there is a single cause and effect, or a spiral. Also, do the lower grades reflect lower ability (i.e., general intelligence) or are they already an amalgam of ability, strengths, and the dimensions of flourishing at school and school satisfaction? This dimension of class clown behavior is certainly embedded in a complex net of variables that warrants further investigation.

While (low) accomplishment is only relevant for the disruptive rule breaker, the most consistent finding is that all forms of class clowning go along with (self-reported) lower

positive relationships with teachers, and this partly mediates the effect of class clowning on low school satisfaction. So, class clowns assume that their relationship with the teacher is impaired; whether this is true or not from the perspective of the teachers or other bystanders in the classroom still needs to be examined. Clearly, the teachers gave lower ratings of social behavior to students displaying class clown behavior (and lower learning-related behavior ratings to the disruptive rule breaker). The fact that these classroom behavior evaluations are more strongly correlated with class clown behavior than the GPA might show that these ratings involve more than just academic ability and might be the expression of some subjectivity in the evaluation of these students. This might come in part from observing the behaviors properly, but the ratings may be lowered by feelings of irritation towards the class clown's disruptive behavior. It might well be that some teachers are able to see the positive qualities of class clown behavior like leadership, while others will only focus on the subversive nature and disruptive quality of the class clowns. This can only be disentangled by utilizing further types of measurements, and by using a longitudinal design. Class clowns do not have a lowered positive relationship to peers (just like in the Damico and Purkey study), so it will be of interest to examine the mutual relationships—also in intervention studies aimed at improving mutual understanding (e.g., by adopting the other perspective).

Particularly the comic talent (and by extension the high scorer in "identified as a class clown) flourishes at school in terms of positive emotions, and the amount of positive emotions counteracts the negative relation between class clowning and school satisfaction for all types of class clowns (except the disruptive rule breaker). This is partly reminiscent of the findings that these people use their signature strengths (i.e., humor) at school and this yields feelings of gratification, amusement, and *schadenfreude*, and amusement or *schadenfreude* in others (Ruch et al. 2014). Also, it was known that all class clowns are high in life of pleasure; i.e., engage in activities that are fun. In this sense, they are better off than underachievers that

lack this sense of fun and might be even lower in school satisfaction. Future studies should investigate whether classrooms that allow for fun have a lower number of class clowns than classes that do not allocate some time for positive emotions and amusement. For someone with humor as a signature strength, engaging in class clowning is a zero sum game. The benefit of having more fun is counteracted by the class clowns' perceived lower positive relationship with the teacher.

The findings for identification as a class clown and for the total score reflect the results of the different dimensions and do not need additional discussion. Thus, the present study underscores the importance of distinguishing between different kinds of class clowns, and treating them as dimensions and not types. These dimensions clearly need further validation. It will be of special importance to see whether teachers can distinguish among them and whether their understanding of class clowns and interaction with them improves as a function of knowing how they are different and how to best deal with them.

Strengths and limitations

There are limitations to the present study. First, the study is limited to a specific age group and the associations of class clown behavior could be different in different age groups as class clowning might change with age. Also, the results might be different if different types of schools were investigated. Secondly, there are issues regarding the sample size. Some of the findings are based on only half of the sample size, as only one of the schools was able to provide grades and teacher ratings. Also, the teachers ratings provided were based on two teachers; this is how the school operates, but for the sake of enhancing the reliability in the study, a higher number of teachers would be desirable. Thirdly, the results are derived from a cross-sectional design. It might be of interest to study these hypotheses in a longitudinal design. Fourthly, the sample size was not large enough to systemically study the

different patterns for the four class clown dimensions. Although the current findings point to certain meaningful differences, this will need to be replicated in future studies.

Conclusions

The use of positive psychology concepts gives further insight into the field of class clown behavior. Further research is necessary to understand the potential dynamics to then also work on interventions to be used by the parties involved. The dissatisfaction with school seems to be preceded by lack of flourishing in some of the dimensions. This might be due to a mismatch between individual signature strengths and the strengths expected by the schools. Activation of positive emotions might be the factor most easily changed. The relationships to teachers are crucial and perhaps a better understanding to the strength of humor overlooked in schools, might be in place. Likewise, activation of strengths might be of interest too. Further studies might also take a closer look at engagement (i.e., flow in schools) and meaning (i.e., activation of a sense of purpose related to school attendance and activities). However, we will need to bear in mind that there are different kinds of class clowns.

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Table 1

Descriptive Statistics and Correlations with Age and Sex for Self-Reported Variables, Grades and Teacher Ratings

					Correlations with	
	Min	*Max*	*M*	*SD*	Age	Sex
Self reports (N = 157)						
Class Clown Behavior Survey (CCBS)						
Total score	1.00	5.17	2.80	0.92	-.06	-.40*
Class clown role	1.00	5.25	2.41	1.19	-.05	-.35*
Comic talent	1.00	5.80	3.94	1.11	-.09	-.29*
Disruptive rule breaker	1.00	5.20	2.44	1.08	-.03	-.26*
Subversive joker	1.00	5.60	2.23	1.04	-.02	-.43*
School satisfaction (MSLSS)	1.38	6.00	4.32	0.89	-.07	-.03
Positive School Experiences (PSEQ)						
Positive emotions	1.00	5.00	3.82	0.82	-.21*	-.19*
Classmates	1.33	5.00	4.30	0.77	-.14	-.04
Teachers	1.33	5.00	3.82	0.86	-.04	-.08
Accomplishment	1.00	5.00	3.86	0.75	-.20*	-.07
Grades and teacher ratings (n = 73)						
GPA	3.50	5.70	4.70	0.48	-.27*	.10
Learning-related behavior	2.71	4.00	3.51	0.39	-.01	.15
Social behavior	3.25	4.00	3.69	0.26	-.10	.06
Classroom behavior (mean)	2.98	4.00	3.60	0.30	-.05	.12

Note. *Age*: 14 to 18 years. *Sex*: 1 = male; 2 = female. *Class clown behavior:* Higher values represent stronger class clown behavior. *School satisfaction* and *Positive school experiences:* Higher values represent higher school satisfaction and positive school experiences. *Grades and teacher ratings*: Higher values represent higher school

achievement (4 represents the grade sufficient to pass) respectively higher positive classroom behavior.
* $p < .05$.

Table 2

Partial Correlations between School Satisfaction, School Experiences, School Achievement, and Teacher Ratings of Classroom Behavior (Controlled for Influences of Age and Sex)

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
(1) School satisfaction	(.90)							
(2) Positive emotions at school	.63*	(.85)						
(3) Positive relationships: Classmates	.47*	.63*	(.85)					
(4) Positive relationships: Teachers	.62*	.52*	.56*	(.81)				
(5) Accomplishment at school	.68*	.61*	.46*	.68*	(.88)			
(6) GPA	.30*	.16	.14	.37*	.35*			
(7) Learning-related behavior	.22	.04	.14	.12	.29*	.62*	(.86)	
(8) Social behavior	.25*	.06	.17	.27*	.22	.39*	.74*	(.54)
(9) Classroom behavior (mean)	.25*	.05	.16	.19	.28*	.56*	.95*	.90*

Note. N = 73-157. Internal consistency (Cronbach's Alpha) for the respective scales is given in the diagonal in brackets.
Grades: higher values represent higher school achievement/higher educational level
* $p < .05$.

Table 3

Partial Correlations between Class Clown Dimensions, Positive School Experiences, GPA, and Teacher Ratings (Controlling for Age and Sex)

	CC		Role		Comic talent		Rule-breaker		Subversive joker	
	r	95% CI	*r*	95% CI	*r*	95% CI	*r*	95% CI	*r*	95% CI
Self reports (N = 157)										
School satisfaction	-.17*	[-.33; -.01]	-.13	[-.29; .02]	.02	[-.13; .18]	-.38*	[-.56; -.25]	-.08	[-.24; .08]
Positive emotions at school	.14	[-.02; .29]	.16*	[.00; .32]	.27*	[.12; .34]	-.10	[-.26; .06]	.11	[-.05; .26]
Positive relationships with classmates	.01	[-.14; .17]	.05	[-.10; .32]	.15	[-.01; .30]	-.09	[-.25; .07]	-.06	[-.22; .10]
Positive relationships with teachers	-.25*	[-.42; -.10]	-.14	[-.30; .02]	-.10	[-.25; .06]	-.42*	[-.61; -.29]	-.18*	[-.34; .02]
Accomplishment at school	-.11	[-.27; .05]	-.06	[-.22; .10]	.08	[-.08; .23]	-.30*	[-.47; -.16]	-.10	[-.25; .06]
GPA and teacher ratings (n = 73)										
Grade point average	-.25*	[-.49; -.02]	-.26*	[-.50; -.04]	-.07	[-.30; .17]	-.33*	[-.58; -.11]	-.17	[-.40; .07]
Learning-related behavior	-.40*	[-.66; -.19]	-.38*	[-.63; -.16]	-.21	[-.44; .03]	-.53*	[-.83; -.36]	-.20	[-.43; .04]
Social behavior	-.44*	[-.71; -.24]	-.39*	[-.64; -.18]	-.29*	[-.53; -.06]	-.46*	[-.73; -.26]	-.29*	[-.53; -.06]
Classroom behavior (overall mean)	-.45*	[-.72; -.25]	-.41*	[-.67; -.20]	-.26*	[-.50; -.03]	-.54*	[-.84; -.37]	-.25*	[-.49; -.02]

Note. CC = Class clown scale total score; Role = class clown role (Identified as the class clown); Rule-breaker = disruptive rule-breaker.

Grades: higher values represent higher school achievement.

* $p < .05$.

Table 4

Results of Mediation Analyses for Class Clown Dimensions as Predictors of Overall School Satisfaction with Dimensions of Positive School Experiences as Mediators (Factor Scores; Controlling for Influences of Age and Sex)

	Effect		Mediation by dimension of positive school experiences (indirect effects a x b)				Total adj. R^2
	Total	Direct					
	c	*c'*	PE	CM	T	A	
Sum score	-0.18*	-0.15*	0.08[a]	0.00	-0.05[a]	-0.04	.54*
Class clown role	-0.12	-0.13*	0.06[a]	0.00	-0.03[a]	-0.02	.55*
Comic talent	0.03	-0.06	0.09[a]	0.01	-0.04[a]	0.03	.54*
Disruptive rule-b.	-0.31*	-0.17*	0.00	-0.01	-0.05[a]	-0.08[a]	.56*
Subversive joker	-0.09	-0.05	0.05[a]	-0.01	-0.04[a]	-0.04	.53*

Note. $N = 155$. PE = Positive emotions at school; CM = Positive relationships with classmates; T = Positive relationships with teachers; A = Accomplishment at school.
[a] The 95% CI obtained for the indirect effect by bootstrapping did not include 0.
c = Total effect of IV (class clown dimensions) on DV (school satisfaction)
c' = Direct effect of IV (class clown dimensions) on DV (school satisfaction)
a x *b* = Indirect effect of IV (class clown dimensions) on DV (school satisfaction) through proposed mediator (dimension of positive school experiences).
Coefficients for the a- and b-paths are not shown but can be obtained from the authors upon request.
* $p < .05$.

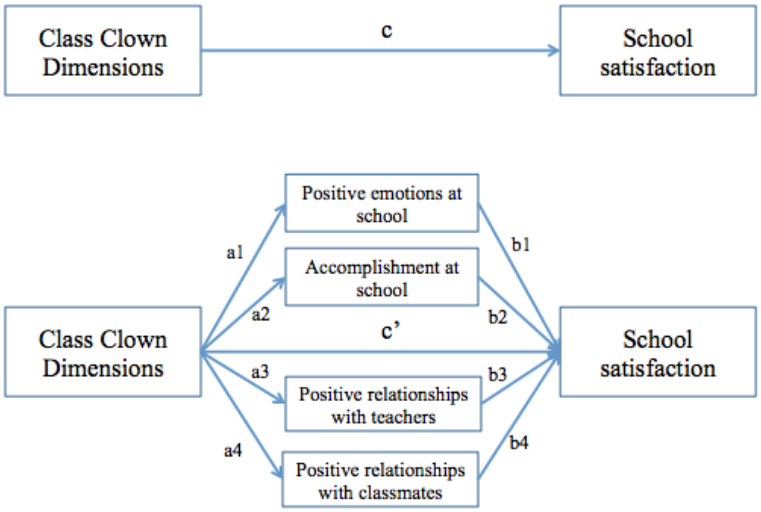

Figure 1. The mediating role of dimensions of school experiences in explaining the relation between four dimensions of class clown behavior and school satisfaction, tested separately for each dimension of class clown behavior and the total score
(a_x = direct effect of IV (class clown dimensions) on mediator (dimensions of positive school experiences), bx = direct effect of mediator (dimensions of positive school experiences) on DV (school satisfaction), c = total effect of IV (class clown dimensions) on DV (school satisfaction), c' = direct effect of IV (class clown dimensions) on DV (school satisfaction))

Figure

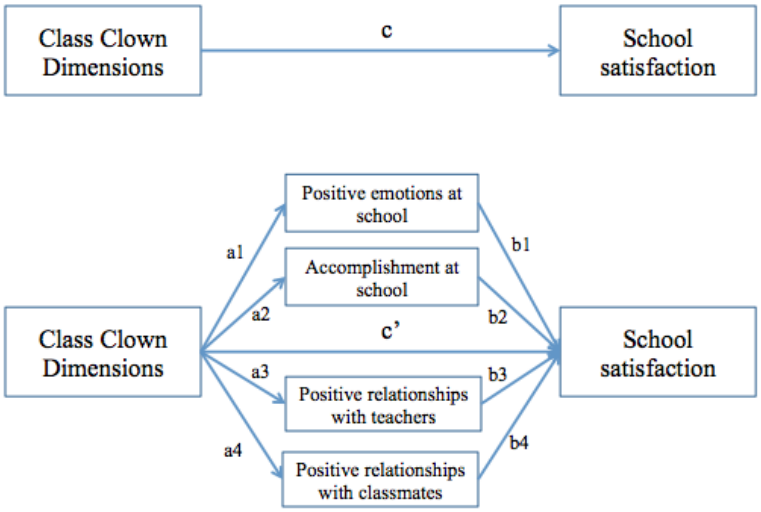

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Table

Table 1

Descriptive Statistics and Correlations with Age and Sex for Self-Reported Variables, Grades and Teacher Ratings

					Correlations with	
	Min	*Max*	*M*	*SD*	Age	Sex
Self reports (N = 157)						
Class Clown Behavior Survey (CCBS)						
Total score	1.00	5.17	2.80	0.92	-.06	-.40*
Class clown role	1.00	5.25	2.41	1.19	-.05	-.35*
Comic talent	1.00	5.80	3.94	1.11	-.09	-.29*
Disruptive rule breaker	1.00	5.20	2.44	1.08	-.03	-.26*
Subversive joker	1.00	5.60	2.23	1.04	-.02	-.43*
School satisfaction (MSLSS)	1.38	6.00	4.32	0.89	-.07	-.03
Positive School Experiences (PSEQ)						
Positive emotions	1.00	5.00	3.82	0.82	-.21*	-.19*
Classmates	1.33	5.00	4.30	0.77	-.14	-.04
Teachers	1.33	5.00	3.82	0.86	-.04	-.08
Accomplishment	1.00	5.00	3.86	0.75	-.20*	-.07
Grades and teacher ratings (n = 73)						
GPA	3.50	5.70	4.70	0.48	-.27*	.10
Learning-related behavior	2.71	4.00	3.51	0.39	-.01	.15
Social behavior	3.25	4.00	3.69	0.26	-.10	.06
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Note. *Age*: 14 to 18 years. *Sex*: 1 = male; 2 = female. *Class clown behavior:* Higher values represent stronger class clown behavior. *School satisfaction* and *Positive school experiences:* Higher values represent higher school satisfaction and positive school experiences. *Grades and teacher ratings*: Higher values represent higher school achievement (4 represents the grade sufficient to pass) respectively higher positive classroom behavior.

* $p < .05$.

Table 2

Partial Correlations between School Satisfaction, School Experiences, School Achievement, and Teacher Ratings of Classroom Behavior (Controlled for Influences of Age and Sex)

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
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Coefficients for the a- and b-paths are not shown but can be obtained from the authors upon request.
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***Highlights (for review)**

- Four dimensions of Class clowns studied
- Predict relationship with school achievement and school satisfaction
- Less positive classroom behaviors
- Lower school satisfaction and achievement
- Positive emotions at school but negative relationships to teachers